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figure how much he could accomplish. All who beheld it agreed in regarding it as a *chef-d'œuvre* of the great master; and as worthy of the highest admiration for the correctness of the drawing, the grace of the attitude, the truth of the colouring, and, in a word, the general effectiveness of the whole.

The painting thus unexpectedly discovered has since been verified by a great number of copies throughout Europe. In

Florence alone there are not fewer than twenty-two. One of these, in the Gallery of Prince Corsini, had till this discovery been regarded as the original, but, on comparison with Signor Botti's, it was at once seen to be a feeble imitation by Vasari.

We understand that Signor Botti intends to make a tour, with his fortunate discovery, through the principal towns of Europe, first visiting Paris.

QUEEN ELIZABETH AND THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR.

ANDRE HERAULT DE MAISSE, who was sent by Henry IV. as ambassador to Queen Elizabeth, has written a memoir, in which he relates all that he heard and saw during his negotiation. This memoir is filled with singular revelations concerning the manners of that celebrated princess and of her court. The care that Herault took in the compilation of this book is accounted for by the importance of his mission, which was undertaken for the purpose of enlightening Henry IV. as to the secret intentions of Elizabeth, who began at this period to alienate herself from France, in order to bind herself more closely to Spain. The Queen, at the time that M. de Maissé wrote his journal (1597-8), was about sixty-five years old. She had then reigned thirty-nine years. Ten years before she had shown herself a worthy daughter of Henry VIII., by the judicial assassination—for it deserves no better name—of the beautiful and unfortunate Queen of Scotland. This journal is so much the more valuable, as it contains revelations that historians have passed over in silence or scarcely alluded to. After a long delay, the audience that M. de Maissé had requested was granted to him, and a gentleman came to fetch him in one of the carriages of the court. "He conducted me," says M. de Maissé, "through a large room, in which were the guards of the Queen, and to the presence-chamber, in which the attendants always remain uncovered, whether the Queen is there or not. He led me into a corner, in which was placed a cushion for me. I waited some time, and at length the Lord Chamberlain came and conducted me by an obscure passage into the privy-chamber, as it is called, at one end of which sat the Queen on a low seat, while at the other end stood gentlemen and ladies in attendance. After I had bowed to her most reverently at the door of the room, she rose, and came five or six steps towards me, nearly in fact to the middle of the chamber. I kissed the hem of her robe, and she embraced me with her two hands, and welcomed me in a gracious manner. Then she returned to her chair, and made me take a place by her side upon a little folding-seat, without arms or back. Afterwards, I commenced speaking to her. She was strangely attired in a dress of white and carnation silver cloth; or, of silver gauze, as it is called. This dress was open at the sleeves, lined with red taffeta, and was fitted with other little sleeves, which hung almost to the ground, and which she fastened and unfastened very frequently. She had the front of her dress open, and often, as if she suffered from heat, she widened with her hands the opening of her cloak, the collar of which was very high, and the lining of which was decorated with rubies and pearls in large quantities, but all of very small dimensions. She also wore a necklace of rubies and pearls, and upon her head was a garland of the same manufacture. Underneath was a large wig, nearly of a red colour, with a number of curl-papers of gold and silver, and some pearls, not of much value, hanging over her forehead. On both sides of her ears were large bands of hair, which rested upon the collar of her cloak, reached almost to her shoulders, and were decorated with curl-papers similar to those upon her head."

In the account of his second interview, although the remarks of M. de Maissé cannot be said to add to our stores of historical knowledge, they nevertheless arouse curiosity, for they lay bare the weak side of the Queen's sex.

"The same day the Queen sent me her carriages. I found her well in health, and in an excellent humour. She was having the spinet played in her chamber, and it seemed that

she was very attentive to it, or pretended to be so, as if I had taken her unawares. I excused myself for disturbing her in her amusement. As she said that she was very fond of music, and that she was having a pavannah,* I replied that she was a good judge, and that it was reported that she was mistress of the art. She said that she had studied it formerly, and still took great pleasure in it.

"She was dressed in a robe of white silver cloth, open very low down, with her bosom uncovered. She wore her accustomed head-dress, but it was diversified by many kinds of precious stones, not however of very great value. She wore a little dress underneath of silver cloth, of a dark peach colour, which was very handsome.

"Whilst I was conversing with her about business she often made great digressions, either on purpose to gain time and not to be too much pressed by my demands, or else from mere habit; and then she excused herself by saying, 'What will you think, Mr. Ambassador, of the importance I attach to such trifles? But this is always the way with old women like me.' Then she went back to the subject of discourse, or else I brought her back, pressing her to answer. She said, 'I am inter Scyllam et Charybdim.'

"She knows all ancient histories, and it is impossible to make allusion to any of them upon which she does not offer some apropos observation. I remarked to her, by the way, that she was well informed of what took place in the world. She said that her hands were long, grasping, and powerful; and then taking off her glove, she showed me her hand, which was indeed very long—longer than mine by full three fingers' breadth. It must have been very handsome formerly, but it is now extremely thin, though its colour is still beautiful. Ah! Mr. Ambassador, where is your gravity stumbling now? I presented to her, at the end of the audience, Secretary Philippe, assuring her of the satisfaction which he had given to the king, my master. She received him very well, saying that she had seen many of his letters, but that until then she had not known him personally. He was upon his knees, and she began to take him by the hair to lift him up, and pretended to give him a box on the ear.

"It is a strange thing how lively she is in body and mind, and how clever in all she attempts to do. That day she was in very good humour and very gay, and, when I took my leave, treated me very favourably, and saluted all the gentlemen who were with me. She is, in truth, a great princess, who is ignorant of nothing."

In the third interview, after M. de Maissé had discussed with the Queen the political interests of the continental powers, she concluded by talking to him of the affection which her people bore her, adding that they were very happy to be under the government of so good a princess.

"I am on the brink of the grave, and must think of dying." Then suddenly catching herself up, she said: 'I am not thinking of dying at present, Mr. Ambassador, as I am not so old as people imagine.'

"I said to her that God would preserve her still for the good of her kingdoms and subjects, and that she was wrong to call herself old as often as she did; for that, thanks be to Heaven, her constitution was such that she had no occasion to call herself so. She answered, that M. de Beauvais used

* A serious dance introduced from Spain, in which the dancers display themselves one before the other, as peacocks do with their tails.

also to say the same thing to her—that she was wrong so often to call herself old. And in truth, with the exception of her face, which showed signs of age, and of her teeth, it is not possible to see so beautiful and so vigorous a disposition, either of body or of mind.

"She was that day dressed in cloth of silver, as usual—what we call gauze in French. Her robe was white, and her stomacher of violet-coloured silk. She had a great quantity of jewels upon her, as well upon her head as inside her collar, round her arms, and on her hands; with a great quantity of pearls, as well about her neck as upon her bracelets. She had two armlets, one on each arm, which were very costly.

"She placed herself upon a seat, and made me sit beside her. She takes great pleasure in the ball-room and in music. She told me that she kept at least sixty musicians; that in her youth she had been a very good dancer; that she had composed ballets and music, and played them and danced them herself. She takes such pleasure in them, that when her women dance, she keeps time with her head, her hand, and her foot, and scolds them if they do not perform well to her mind; and doubtless she has a right to do so. She told me that she used to dance well when young, and had learnt to jump high, after the Italian fashion. She told me that people called her the Florentine. I answered, that this was a sign



QUEEN ELIZABETH'S RECEPTION OF THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR.

"She affects great gravity among her people. When I entered her chamber this time, she was walking up and down in a marvellously proud manner, and with her was Mr. Secretary Cecil; and I think that she did this on purpose, in order that I might see her, whilst she pretended not to see me. The same day, after dinner, the Queen sent for me to go to her council; and having come into the chamber of the said council, I saw a gentleman, who told me that the Queen would soon pass with her ladies to go to the ball, and asked me if I wished to see her pass. (It was she who had sent him to me.) I went, and immediately she came out, and seeing me from afar off, came towards me, and said that she did not expect to find me there, that she was going to the ball, and asked me if I would go with her. I said that I would obey her commands in all things, and accompany her.

that she was wise and prudent, and that this name was not given without reason."

M. de Maissé, being a clever courtier, here kills two birds with one stone; for his journal was to pass under the eye of Marie de Medicis.

"She said, that it was because she was thought cunning; but that she was not so. She spoke of the languages she had learnt; for she often makes digressions; and told me that when she came to the crown, she knew several languages better than she knew her own. And because I said to her, that this was a great merit in a princess, she said that it was not wonderful to teach a woman to speak, but that it was much more difficult to make her hold her tongue."

The remainder of the journal treating only of political matters well known to history, we shall here close our quotations.